

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information processing apparatus comprising:  
    playback means for playing back a plurality of  
    pieces of media information;

5       monitoring means for monitoring a playback status  
    of the plurality of pieces of media information in said  
    playback means;

        storage means for storing priority information  
        representing priorities of the plurality of pieces of  
10     media information; and

        limiting means for limiting playback of the media  
        information in said playback means on the basis of a  
        playback status monitoring result of said monitoring  
        means and the priority information.

15     2. The apparatus according to claim 1, further  
        comprising designation means for designating the  
        priorities for a plurality of media.

        3. The apparatus according to claim 1, further  
        comprising notifying means for, when media information  
20     limited in playback by said limiting means exists,  
        representing that the media information limited in  
        playback exists.

        4. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein  
        limitation of playback by said limiting means includes  
25     stop of playback of media information.

        5. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein  
        limitation of playback by said limiting means includes

a decrease in playback quality of media information.

6. The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising return means for returning a playback state of the media information limited by said limiting means to a normal state on the basis of the playback status monitoring result of said monitoring means and the priority information.

7. The apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said limiting means has a plurality of types of executable limitation items, and

said designation means can set a priority for each pair of a type of media information and a limitation item.

8. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said monitoring means monitors whether processing of a media information amount to be played back is completed within a predetermined time.

9. The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein when said monitoring means represents that processing of the media information amount to be played back is not completed within the predetermined time, said limiting means inhibits said playback means from playing back media information given a low priority based on the priority information.

10. The apparatus according to claim 9, further comprising display means for, when media information limited in playback by said limiting means exists,

displaying that the media information limited in  
playback exists.

11. The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein when  
media information limited in playback exists and said  
5 monitoring means represents that processing of the  
media information amount to be played back is completed  
within the predetermined time, said limiting means  
enables playback of media information having a high  
priority out of the playback-inhibited media  
10 information.

12. The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein when  
said monitoring means represents that processing of the  
media information amount to be played back is not  
completed within the predetermined time, said limiting  
15 means decreases playback quality of media information  
having a low priority in said playback means.

13. An information processing method comprising:

the playback step of playing back a plurality of  
pieces of media information;

20 the monitoring step of monitoring a playback  
status of the plurality of pieces of media information  
in the playback step;

the storage step of storing priority information  
representing priorities of the plurality of pieces of  
25 media information; and

the limiting step of limiting playback of the  
media information in the playback step on the basis of

a playback status monitoring result in the monitoring step and the priority information.

14. The method according to claim 13, further comprising the designation step of designating the  
5 priorities for a plurality of media.

15. The method according to claim 13, further comprising the notifying step of, when media information limited in playback in the limiting step exists, representing that the media information limited  
10 in playback exists.

16. The method according to claim 13, wherein limitation of playback in the limiting step includes stop of playback of media information.

17. The method according to claim 13, wherein  
15 limitation of playback in the limiting step includes a decrease in playback quality of media information.

18. The method according to claim 13, further comprising the return step of returning a playback state of the media information limited in the limiting  
20 step to a normal state on the basis of the playback status monitoring result in the monitoring step and the priority information.

19. The method according to claim 14, wherein  
the limiting step has a plurality of types of  
25 executable limitation items, and

a priority can be set for each pair of a type of media information and a limitation item in the

designation step.

20. The method according to claim 13, wherein in the monitoring step, whether processing of a media information amount to be played back is completed within a predetermined time is monitored.

21. The method according to claim 20, wherein when processing of the media information amount to be played back is represented in the monitoring step not to be completed within the predetermined time, media information given a low priority based on the priority information is inhibited in the limiting step from being played back in the playback step.

22. The method according to claim 21, further comprising the display step of, when media information limited in playback in the limiting step exists, displaying that the media information limited in playback exists.

23. The method according to claim 21, wherein when media information limited in playback exists and processing of the media information amount to be played back is represented in the monitoring step to be completed within the predetermined time, playback of media information having a high priority out of the playback-inhibited media information is enabled in the limiting step.

24. The method according to claim 20, wherein when processing of the media information amount to be played

back is represented in the monitoring step not to be completed within the predetermined time, playback quality of media information having a low priority in the playback step is decreased in the limiting step.

- 5 25. A computer-readable memory which stores a computer program for causing a computer to execute an information processing method having:

the playback step of playing back a plurality of pieces of media information;

- 10 the monitoring step of monitoring a playback status of the plurality of pieces of media information in the playback step;

- the storage step of storing priority information representing priorities of the plurality of pieces of media information; and
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the limiting step of limiting playback of the media information in the playback step on the basis of a playback status monitoring result in the monitoring step and the priority information.

- 20 26. A computer program for causing a computer to execute an information processing method having:

the playback step of playing back a plurality of pieces of media information;

- the monitoring step of monitoring a playback status of the plurality of pieces of media information in the playback step;
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the storage step of storing priority information

